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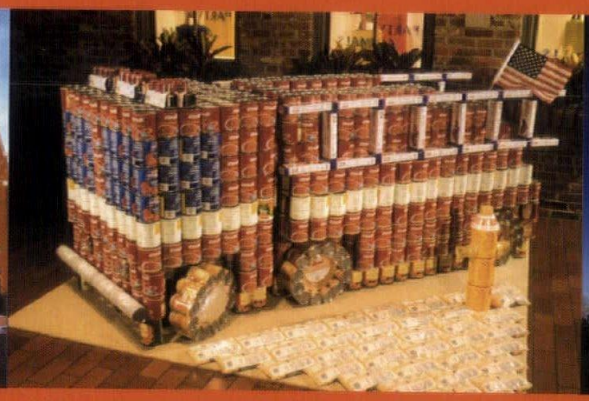
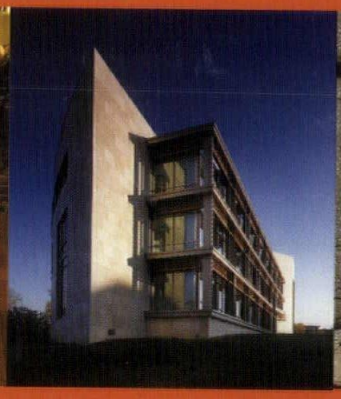

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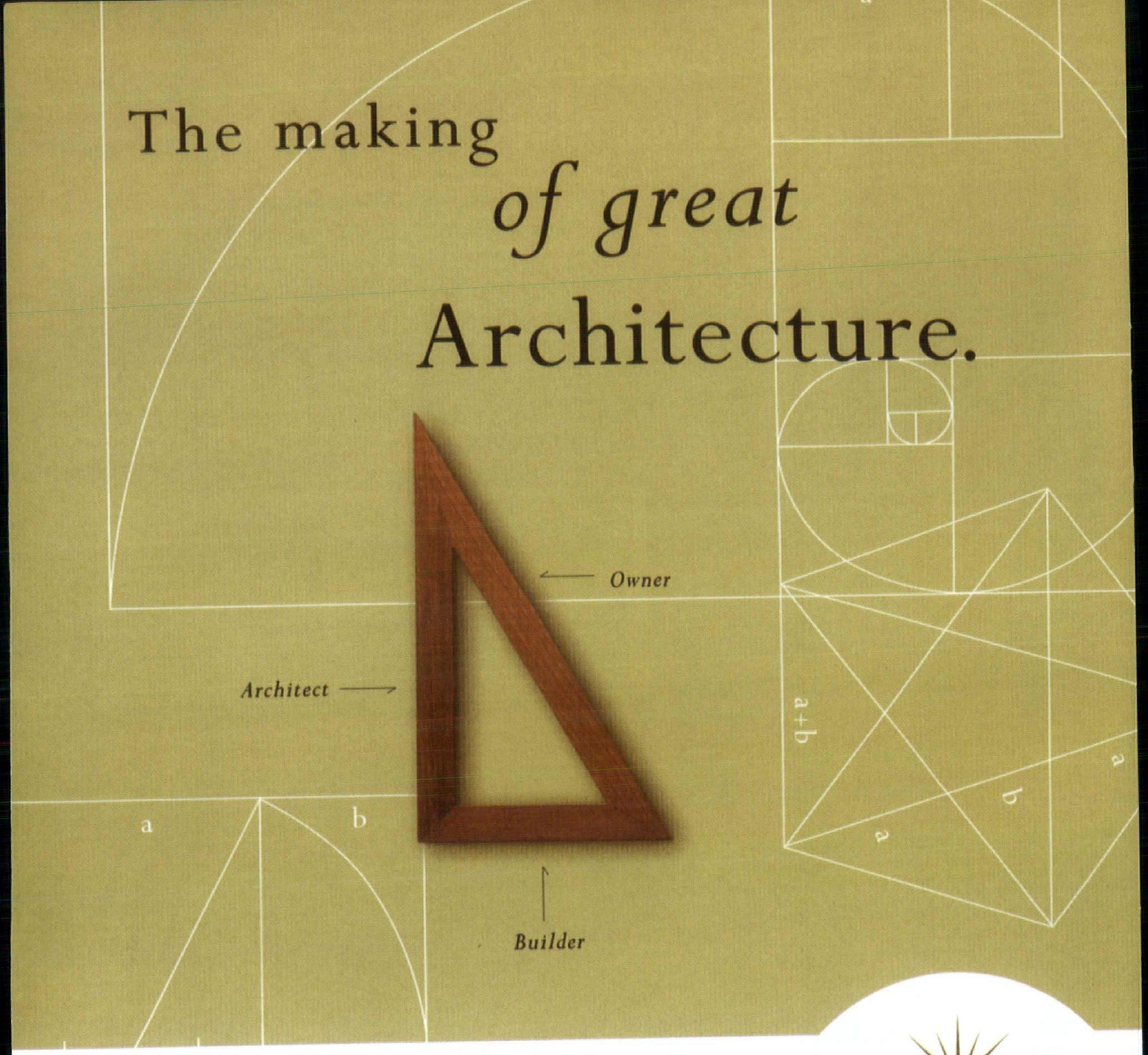

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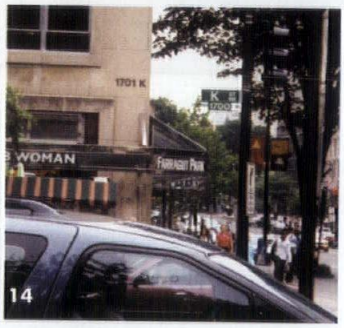

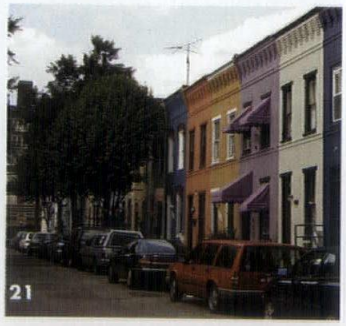

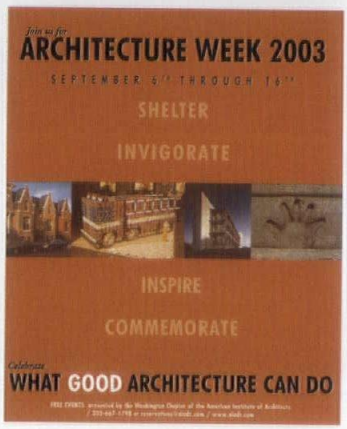

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ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTORS

Scott Phillips, AIA, is an architect with the DC office of SmithGroup, Inc. He is currently working on a proposed mixed-use commercial/arts complex in downtown DC. Phillips graduated with a Bachelor of Architecture from North Carolina State University in 1997.

Daniel Emberley has a degree in Geography from the University of Chicago and writes on architecture and urban studies. He has created tours and demonstrations for the National Building Museum, the League of Women Voters, and AIA/DC. He is an expert in information and office management system re-invention.

Chris French, Assoc. AIA, is Chair of AIA/DC's Committee on the Environment (COTE). A LEED (Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design)-accredited professional, French practices architecture for Torti Gallas and Partners in Silver Spring. He recently served the U.S. Green Building Council on a national committee charged with developing a LEED product for campuses.

Linda Hesh is a local artist who photographs buildings under construction. She is currently working on the Tivoli Theatre and previously shot the new DC Convention Center. Her work is in the collection of the Library of Congress and the DC Commission for the Arts and Humanities.

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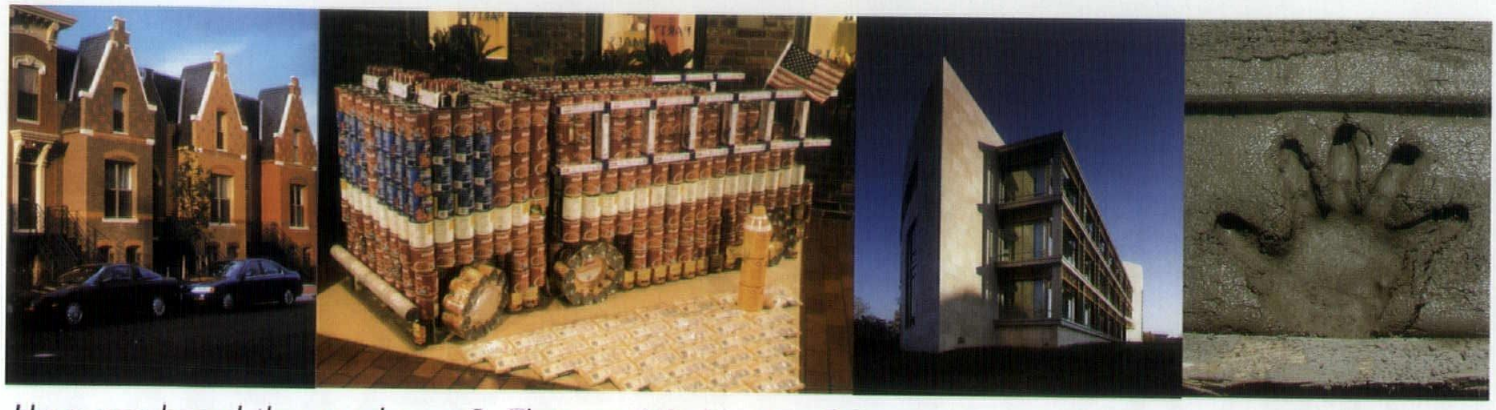
WHAT GOOD ARCHITECTURE CAN DO



Have you heard the good news? They say Washington DC is immune to the real estate bubble, rising unemployment, and the sagging economy. From what we see at the Washington Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, they may be right.

Architects are working on weekends. Firms are hiring. Construction is making the city very noisy—and very exciting. Every day, the phone rings in our office with a homeowner on the line, saying, "I need an architect." One by one, blocks of rowhouses are coming back to life as people make the city their home.

People are refinancing and rediscovering the most basic good that architecture can do: *shelter.* Put a roof over your head, surround you with walls to keep you warm, and let in light to lift your spirits. Architects fulfill these simple requirements in magnificent ways; you can see how on September 12th when a jury announces the latest winners of our Chapter Awards.

"Shelter in place," the government told us last winter, and many of us rushed out to buy duct tape and plastic sheeting, canned goods and batteries, expecting the worst. It turned out, fortunately, that we were over-prepared for a magical snowstorm. What have you done with your safe-room supplies? You're probably feeling more hopeful now; consider helping the Washingtonians whose only shelter is one for the homeless.

More than 350,000 meals have been fed to Washingtonians in need over the past five years through *CAN*STRUCTION, the annual competition where teams of local architects build structures out of canned goods. During an exhibit September 7th to 14th, the public can vote for their favorite *CAN*STRUCTION by donating canned food "ballots." All of the food is donated to the Capital Area Food Bank to feed the hungry.

What else can architects do to help? Design buildings that *invigorate* a neighborhood. The redevelopment of the Tivoli Theater in Columbia Heights, for instance, has been three years in the planning to ensure that the community who has lived around this dilapidated landmark for the last 25 years can enjoy its rebirth. A grocery store, theater, stores, and homes are finally coming. Put on a hard hat and go behind the gates of one of the construction sites that's changing the face of Washington on September 8th.

Does a steel skeleton on a construction site make you think about how buildings stand up? Does the view from your office window recharge you? If you see a fire truck made out of hundreds of cans of tomatoes, do you look at your groceries in a new way? Good architecture can *inspire.* If you've got the spirit, you may want to be an architect. Start thinking seriously about it at the Student Competition on September 16th or by meeting some of Washington's busiest new architects on September 9th.

The city itself seems inspired, moving forward at a healthy pace—ground breaking, scaffolds climbing, ribbons cutting…flowers growing. In a tiny garden in Southwest DC, there's reason to pause. One of Washington's newest, quietest landmarks is the Leckie Memorial, a project to *commemorate* the lives of four Washingtonians lost on September 11th, 2001. Forty volunteer architects and 394 school children have worked together this past year to build something good in the face of evil.

Shelter, Invigorate, Inspire, Commemorate… just part of what good architecture can do. We have a lot to celebrate during Architecture Week this September—enough so that our week will be, in fact, 11 days long. We have too much of a good thing, and we'd like to share some with you.

—Hannah McCann
Editor/ARCHITECTUREDC

A LESSON IN MEMORIAL DESIGN

at M.V. Leckie Elementary School

by Mary Fitch, AICP

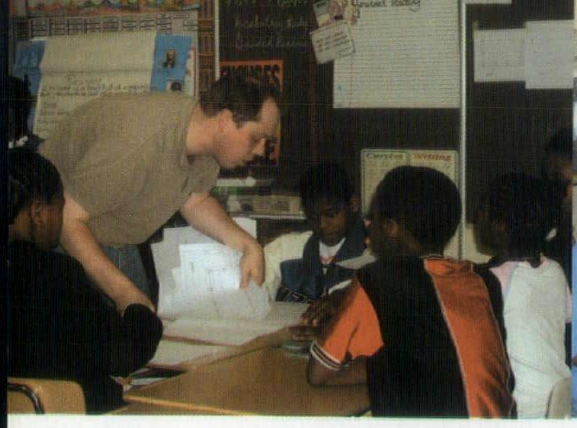
When Flight 77 hit the Pentagon on September 11th, 2001, M.V. Leckie Elementary School's building actually shook from the force of the explosion. From its vantage point across the river in Southwest DC, the school witnessed a frightening spectacle of fire and smoke.

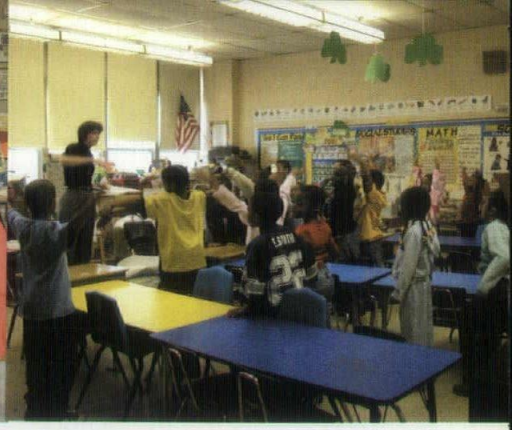
Worse was the news that two of their own were on the plane: fifth-grade teacher Hilda Taylor and sixth-grade student Bernard Brown, Jr., on a special trip with other students and teachers sponsored by the National Geographic Society. Among those killed in the Pentagon were two Leckie parents, Johnny Doctor and Marsha Ratchford, both information specialists with the Navy.

On September 11th, 2003, Leckie Elementary will dedicate a memorial garden to these individuals built on school property with the help of 40 volunteers from the Washington Architectural Foundation. This is the story of how a tiny foundation and 394 children managed to build a memorial in Washington in one year.

The Foundation's connection to Leckie began well before the Pentagon attack. Earlier that summer, Pamella Shaw, a third-grade teacher at Leckie, asked the Foundation to run its Architecture in the Schools (AIS) program in her classroom. Coming so early in the semester, the tragedy quickly changed the focus of the class to a discussion of memorials and monuments. Some of the students' work can be see in last year's Architecture Week issue of *ARCHITECTURE*DC.

As the first anniversary approached, our Foundation wanted to do more. Members of the Foundation Board and staff went back to Leckie and spoke with principal Clementine Homesley. She listened very politely to our general ideas about doing a mural or some sculptural element using the children's handprints. She then walked us to a grassy area just outside the school's auditorium,





divided into three spaces by the access doors of the auditorium. Homesley suggested three gardens: one for Bernard, one for Hilda, and one for the two parents, which together would form a unified composition.

I suppose that, with all of the media coverage of Ground Zero, it might have occurred to us to run a high-profile competition to design the garden. But, oddly enough for a design organization, our chief focus was never the design itself—it was always about the kids. And this proved to be the right strategy; their involvement from the very start is why this project succeeded.

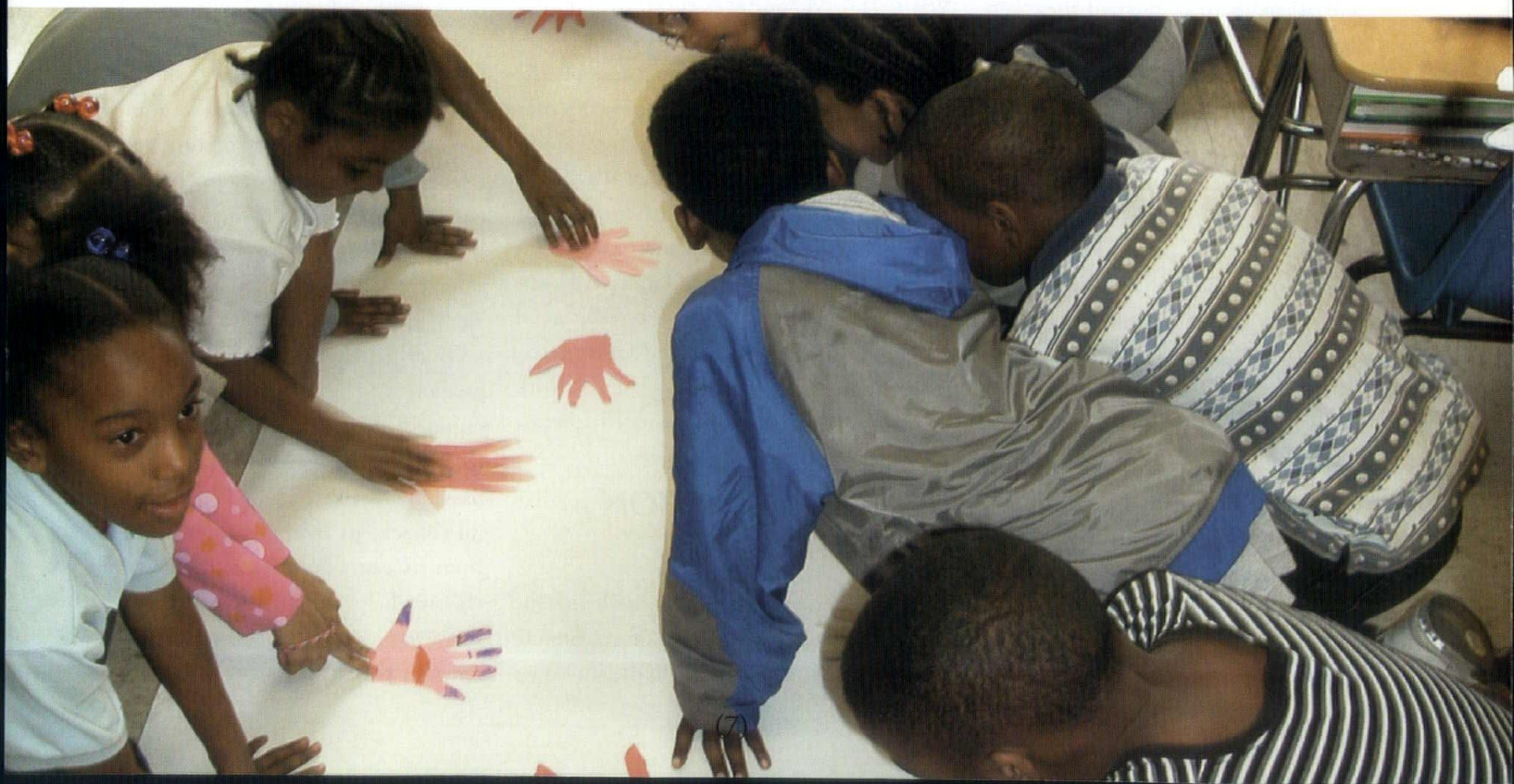
WALK LIKE AN ARCHITECT

To make the process meaningful, we had to do a little prep work on how to design. Forty volunteers from the Foundation worked in each classroom at Leckie once a month throughout the 2002-2003 school year. While we didn't actually teach them how to walk like an architect, Beth Judy (the Foundation Program Manager) and I taught Theresa Kelley's first grade class how to be columns (one child, standing tall with hands raised), arches (two children, standing, with hands clasped), and domes (three or four children, standing with hands clasped). Our class was so enthusiastic about being various parts of a building that, throughout the rest of the year, all we had to do was walk in the room and say, "Mrs. Kelley's class: columns!" and we would have 20 or so columns standing at attention.

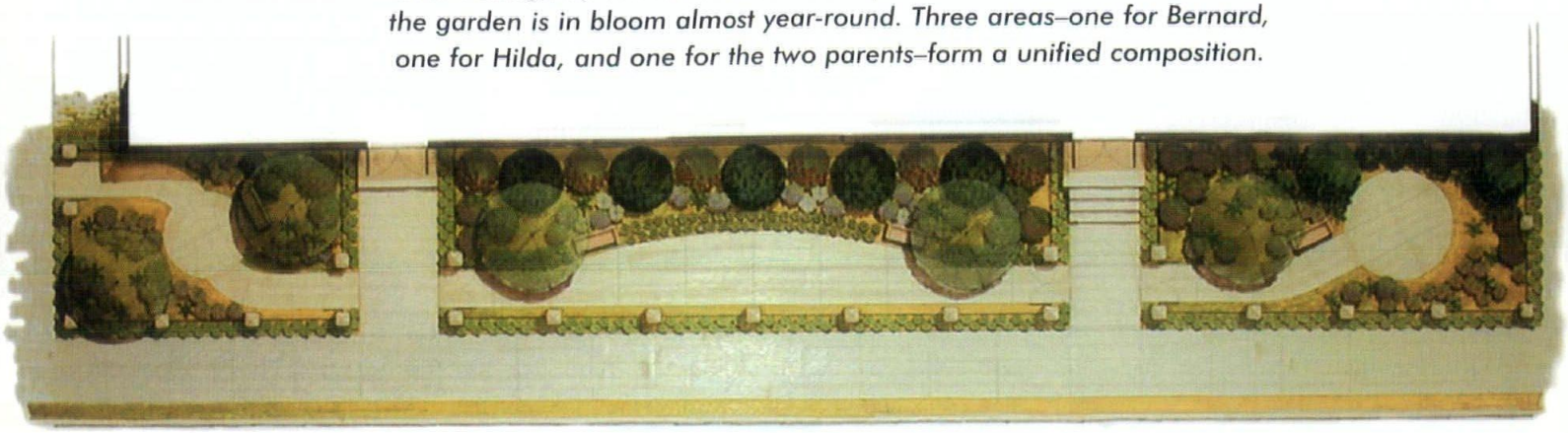
Volunteer Jamie Fleckenstein's second-grade class modeled the National Mall. One child stood in the middle with hands pointing upward to suggest the Washington Monument. Around him were four or five children waving their arms to suggest the flags. For the Lincoln Memorial, a child "sat in" for the President, surrounded by classmates acting as columns. Between the Lincoln and the Washington Monument, children lying end to end became a rather active version of the Reflecting Pool.

Foundation Board member and AIS director Mary Kay Lanzillotta, AIA, worked with the entire fourth and fifth grades in one marathon session on measuring and scale. Students marveled that the measurement from fingertip to fingertip is the same as from head to toe.

By January, we moved on from shapes and scale to learning about plants and gardens. Our first-graders studied a mum plant without the pot to see the roots and identify its many parts. By the end of the session, they were able to name all four



In the design by volunteer and landscape architect Jamie Fleckenstein, the garden is in bloom almost year-round. Three areas–one for Bernard, one for Hilda, and one for the two parents–form a unified composition.



elements of soil (can you name them?). The pre-school class with volunteers Lyn Schwartz (AIA/DC Special Events Manager) and Charles Almonte pressed flowers in their journals.

In March, it was time to design. Using a path design developed by Heidi Zielstorff, AIA, of RTKL Associates Architects, the older grades began to locate trees and plants that would grow well in a shade garden. Our first-graders were charged with determining how best to incorporate 394 handprints in the walkways of the garden. First, though, they needed to understand how to read a plan. I used maps of the school at different scales and asked them to pretend they were birds flying at different heights above the school. The air got pretty thin as we ascended to accommodate a satellite map, but we quickly came back to earth with a hastily drawn plan of Mrs. Kelley's classroom. Our twenty little birds then settled in to design the path. Teamwork is not really in the skill-set of a first grader (especially when you have been flying for 20 minutes), but it was remarkable how, with a little encouragement, we were all working together on one design.

Later that month, with the students' work spread out in front of him, landscape architect Jamie Fleckenstein synthesized several recurring design themes: flowering plants near walkways, benches under trees, and trees placed throughout the site. With the children's ideas as a starting point, Fleckenstein added flowering perennials such as rhododendron, camellia, and oak leaf hydrangea. His scheme keeps the garden in bloom almost year-round with a special display in early spring when hundreds of blue and purple violets, lilies, crocuses, and daffodils will bloom.

WITH A LOT OF HELP FROM OUR FRIENDS

As well as being able to handle an entire auditorium full of fourth- and fifth-graders, Mary Kay Lanzillotta, AIA, is a talented partner with Hartman-Cox Architects. One of her projects is the World War II Memorial currently under construction near the Reflecting Pool. Grunley-Walsh Construction, one of the construction firms on the project, was intrigued by Lanzillotta's stories about Leckie. Engineers from Grunley-Walsh met with us on site and agreed to donate their services for site preparation and construction of the walkways and fence. Johnson's Florist and Garden Centers offered a really good deal on the plants, benches, and soaker hoses. The Shockey Companies helped with classroom supplies and donated precast concrete caps for the fence posts.

394 CONSTRUCTION MANAGERS

Construction began in April with the demolition of the existing chain link fence. By April 22nd, the walkways were being poured. Over the next several days, classes arrived to put their hands in wet cement. Many found this "very cool" to get their hands dirty in the service of art. Others found it rather squishy. The news media loved the hand print days. Local papers and television stations covered the event, interviewing students, teachers, and volunteers.

Planting day came the following week. We wanted to get the garden planted by mid-May so that it would have a chance to settle in before its formal dedication on September 11th. Volunteers arrived at the site early and were soon followed by a huge truck from Johnson's Florist and Garden Centers. Chesapeake Street was suddenly a blaze of color as trees, shrubs, and flowering ground cover were unloaded from the truck. Volunteers quickly got to work to prepare the site with the help of the Grunley-Walsh construction crew and their bobcat tractor. Big loads of topsoil, leaf compost, and shredded mulch were moved to the site. And, as before, class by class, the student body of Leckie came out to help build the garden. Fleckenstein and Lanzillotta outlined the important steps of planting, from digging the hole deep enough to providing fertilizer so that plants won't go into shock, to carefully removing the plant from its pot. In twos and threes, all 394 children helped to plant the memorial. After they were done, they all took a good look, remembering which plant was "theirs." And

while many of the younger children did not completely understand the serious purpose of all that mud, as they grow older, they will think back and remember that they were part of this special project.

LESSONS LEARNED (AND NOT JUST BY THE KIDS)

In some ways, this was a very simple project. To build a memorial in Washington without having to go through the alphabet soup of regulatory agencies is, by itself, something of an achievement. Because this garden is closely associated with people directly affected by the tragedy, there was no shortage of people who wanted to help, either by volunteering their time or their money, especially after all those helpful media reports. The design of the garden, as well, is simple, literal, and understandable.

In other ways, though, this memorial raises rather complex issues about how we choose to remember. Unlike some recent memorials that you might find on the Mall or elsewhere in the country, it does not commemorate loss. It shows you, instead, what can be learned from loss: a deep respect and reverence for the promise and meaning of lives too brief. Learning about them will make you want to achieve, perhaps, what they could not. In that way, their promise lives on. We started this project as a gift from the Foundation to Leckie. Instead, it has become a lesson from the children to us, to the city, and to the country about how to build hope out of terrible loss.

The Leckie Memorial Garden has been built thanks to the help of Grunley-Walsh Joint Venture; Johnson's Florist and Garden Centers; The Shockey Companies; Mr. and Mrs. Len Turner; Phillip G. Yates; James and Kay Davis; Zimmer Gunsul Frasca; Tracy Meeks Jacob; Eddie and Harriett Meeks; Ronald O'Rourke and Mary Fitch; Ruppert I.P. McCave; Mary Katherine Lanzillotta, AIA; and the Rotary Foundation of Washington DC.

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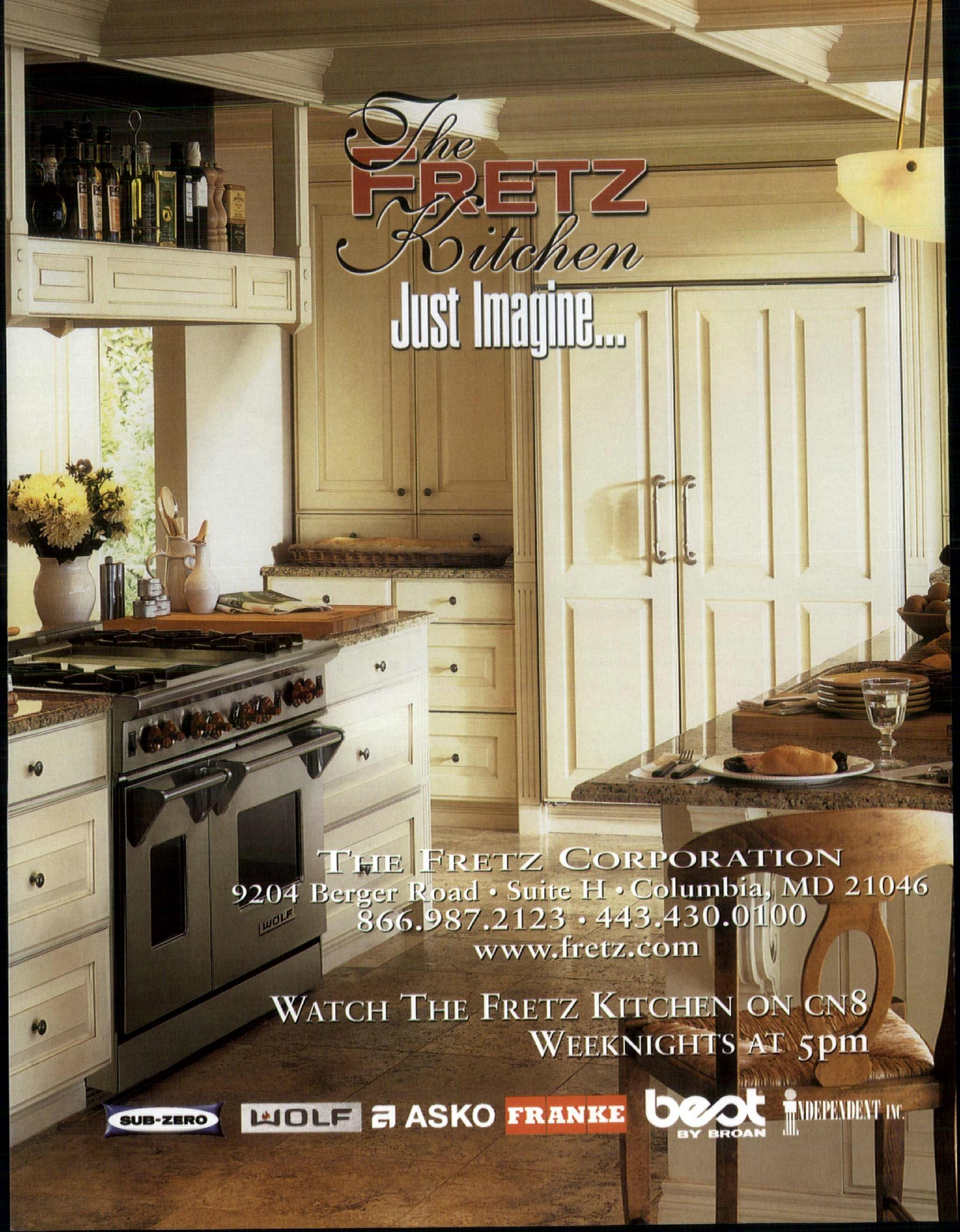
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 11TH DEDICATION OF THE LECKIE GARDEN MEMORIAL *SEE PAGE 20*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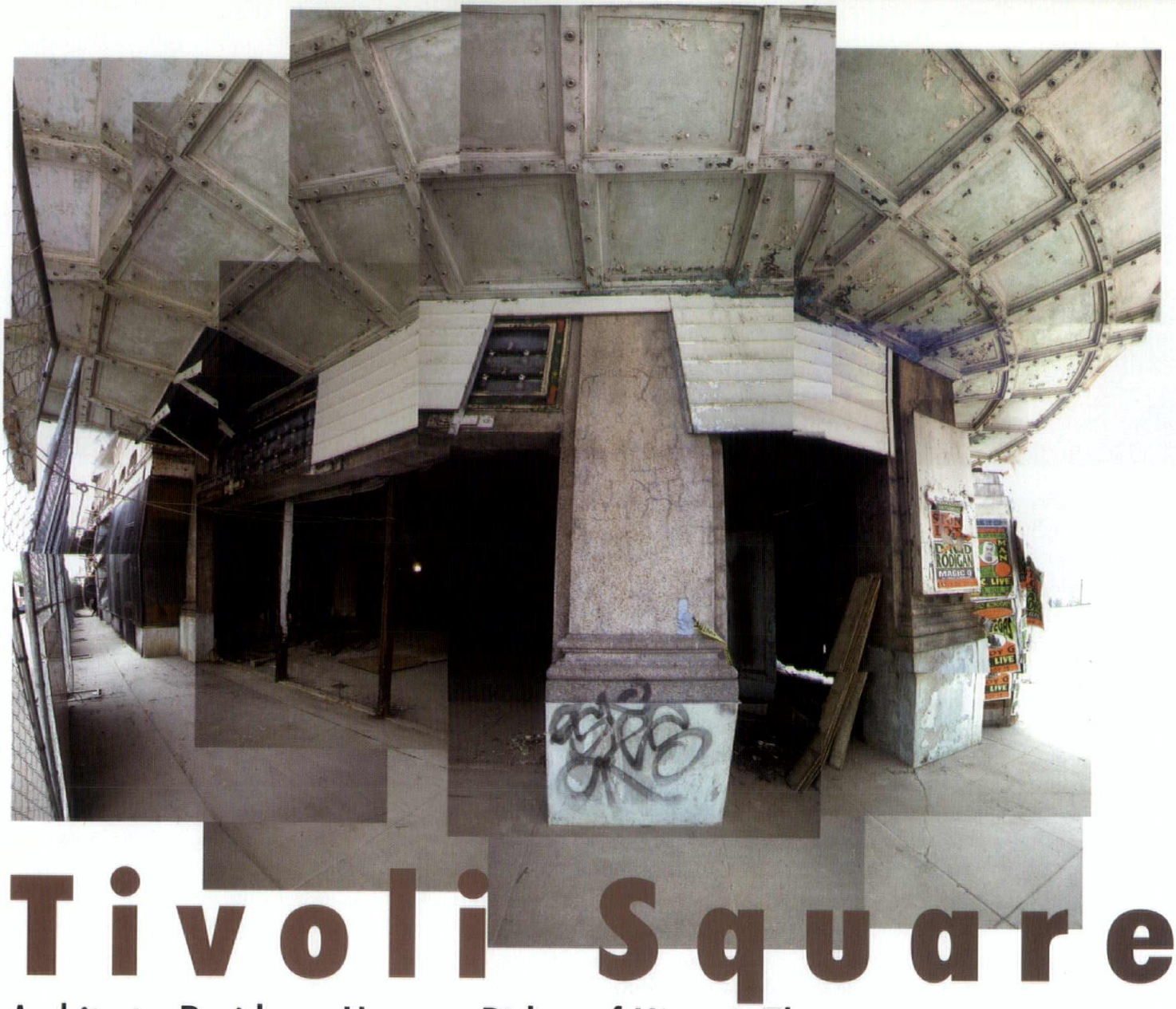

Linda Hesh

Tivoli Square

Architects, Residents Uncover Riches of Historic Theater

by Scott Phillips, AIA

"February, 1962, 'Splendor in the Grass,'" recalls Bethesda resident Guy Hammer of his fateful trip to the Tivoli Theater. That night, Hammer, then 18, lost his wallet and its contents, including $23, his draft card, driver's license, some family photos, and a picture of his then-fiancée—his only photo of her. They never married, and her image became a distant memory for him. Then he received an unusual house call this past June: a demolition worker had uncovered Hammer's wallet, buried in the Tivoli Theater orchestra pit for more than 40 years.

To be sure, the Tivoli has more stories to tell. Once considered the most opulent movie palace in the region, the hulking, crumbling, Mediterranean Revival-style edifice looming over the Columbia Heights Metro station has been silent for more than 25 years, but it will reopen in late Spring 2004 as the centerpiece of a $37-million, mixed-use development named Tivoli Square.

Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the Tivoli was designed in 1924 by renowned theater architect Thomas Lamb (designer of the original Madison Square Garden). It sported a red clay tile roof and vaulted dome ceiling (with near-perfect acoustics), a hexagonal lobby, and an interior lavishly fitted with ornate plaster work, imported marble stairs and floors, mahogany paneling, ornamental iron work and crystal chandeliers, and other riches. The theater featured a concave, sloping floor for improved sightlines and seating for 2,500, including the balcony. "It was the most luxurious building I had ever been in—like another world," remembers Guy Hammer. "The dome reminded me of a church." At its opening, *The Washington Post* hailed the theater as a "magnificent addition to the real showplaces of the District."

Through the 1950s, the Tivoli hosted movies, ballets, orchestral concerts, and other live performances, but it began to decline in the 1960s and eventually closed in 1976. The city purchased the land, but years of vandalism and neglect left the theater derelict. In 1999, the District of Columbia Redevelopment Land Agency

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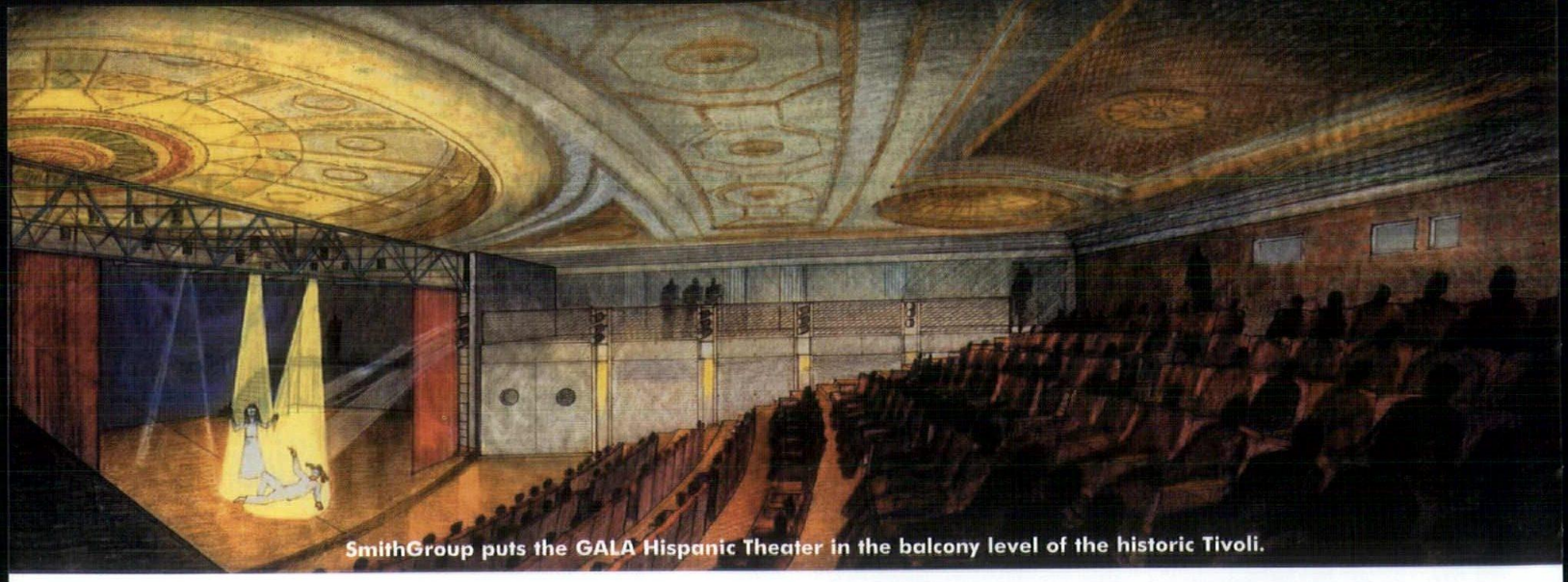
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 8TH TIVOLI SQUARE CONSTRUCTION WATCH TOUR SEE PAGE 20



SmithGroup puts the GALA Hispanic Theater in the balcony level of the historic Tivoli.

initiated a Request for Proposal for development rights to the site. A mixed-use plan submitted by Tivoli Partners, led by District developer Horning Brothers and citizen-based Columbia Heights Development Corporation, won out over three other submissions.

In addition to providing much-needed parking and a mixture of affordable and market-rate town homes, the winning proposal included full interior demolition of the Tivoli to accommodate a new Giant Food store. Residents, neighborhood arts groups, and Mayor Anthony Williams resisted the scheme, instead seeking full preservation of the structure. Eventually the development team agreed to move the grocery store to an adjacent location on the site and preserve the entire theater structure. Nevertheless, the interior was so deteriorated that little could be reused. Historic marble, millwork, light fixtures, and hardware were all gone. Local preservation expert Mary Oehrlein, FAIA, whose firm Oehrlein & Associates is Preservation Architect for Tivoli Theater, recalls her first impression of the theater: "All the plaster had fallen down. There was a tree growing through the roof. It was a very special building in very poor condition. All you can do is say, 'OK, this is where we start.'"

A feasibility study showed that it was not economically viable to restore the theater to its original capacity, so Horning Brothers searched for a local theater company to occupy a smaller arts space. From more than a dozen applicants, they selected GALA Hispanic Theater, a vital Latin American arts organization operating in Columbia Heights for more than 25 years. The DC office of the architecture firm SmithGroup agreed to donate their architectural services for GALA's feasibility study.

SmithGroup worked through a progression of schemes showing different locations and configurations for the theater. Initial plans put GALA in a street-level "shoebox" space that had been deemed undesirable for retail, but the project team wanted to incorporate historically public theater spaces into the GALA space. The architects proposed placing GALA in the balcony level of the Tivoli by extending the floor to create a stage area and reusing the existing stepped concrete rows for seating. "The new configuration, with the number of rows reduced to seat 250 people and the dome like a 'hat' over the audience…gives the theater a more intimate feel," says Frank Le Bousse, SmithGroup Project Architect.

The move galvanized the project. In addition to exposing the domed ceiling, the plan reopens the theater lobby and grand stairs to the public. "The maximum historic fabric is accessible to the maximum number of people," explains Mary Oehrlein, FAIA. "Areas that were always public spaces will remain public spaces." Everyone on the project team agreed that the new configuration made the project better. "The project would not have happened without the architects," states GALA executive

Linda Hesh

Tivoli Square will include the GALA Hispanic Theater, a Giant Food store, retail and office space, and town homes. Completion expected in late Spring 2004.

Rebecca Medrano. Catherine Timko, Public Relations for Horning Brothers, agrees: "SmithGroup and Oehrlein & Associates created a solution that was economically viable for the developer and met the wide-ranging requirements of preservationists, residents, and local interest groups."

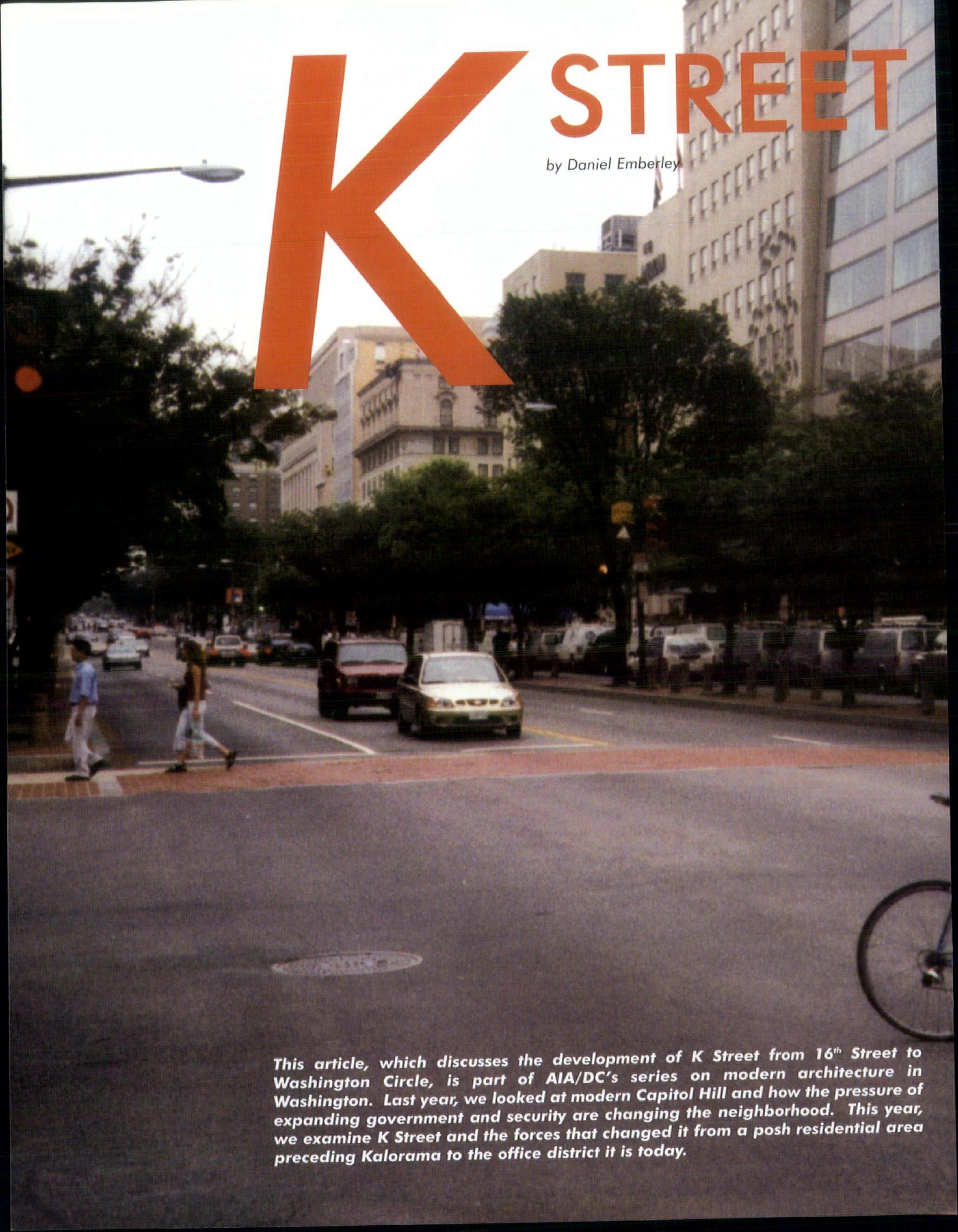
The revival of the Tivoli has been a lengthy, complex process involving numerous civic agencies, historic preservation boards, and myriad community action groups with varying interests. A complete team effort has made the project successful. "It has been like an alignment of the stars," explains Sean Cahill, CEO of Development for Horning Brothers. "We have expert team members working together, leaving their egos at the door." Cahill also stresses the importance of $8 million in project funding from the District of Columbia and the Washington Metro Area Transit Authority. "For historic renovation projects, this is what the city needs to do."

At the May 2003 groundbreaking, focus turned from the Tivoli's roller coaster past to the promise of its future. In addition to the GALA Hispanic Theater, Tivoli Square brings a 53,000 square-foot Giant Food store (designed by Mushinsky Associates/MR+A) with 220 parking spaces, 24,000 square feet of street-level retail, 28,000 square feet of commercial space, and 40 town homes (designed by Ernest Bland Associates) to a long-underserved community. Tivoli Partners has also worked with Monarc Construction (General Contractor) and Prince Construction (Demolition Contractor) to bring jobs to Columbia Heights residents. "We have 25 demolition workers on site today," Cahill said recently, "and 16 are Columbia Heights residents placed by the Department of Employment Services." Horning Brothers believes Tivoli Square will ultimately bring at least 200 permanent jobs and 250 construction jobs to the Columbia Heights Community.

"Columbia Heights is excited about this project," says Frank Le Bousse. "People had walked by this vacant building for years, so the interest in the building was already there, but the developer took a major risk in restoring the theater, and only the developer can piece a complex project together like this. If success can be judged by the excitement generated, the project is already a success."

K STREET

by Daniel Emberley



This article, which discusses the development of K Street from 16th Street to Washington Circle, is part of AIA/DC's series on modern architecture in Washington. Last year, we looked at modern Capitol Hill and how the pressure of expanding government and security are changing the neighborhood. This year, we examine K Street and the forces that changed it from a posh residential area preceding Kalorama to the office district it is today.

RECONSIDERED

In the 1960s and 70s, Washington built a new downtown along K Street west of the White House. Often derided, K Street has a fascinating history.

Soon after L'Enfant designed his brilliant plan for the capital city, K Street took on special prominence. The plan of 1792 (Thackary and Vallance) shows it to be the widest east-west street running border to border. The corners of the intersection of K and 16th Street are shown clipped, as though this square were intended for a special civic space.

By the 1870s, K Street was the fashionable location for large mansions. Shephard Row, designed by Adolph Cluss and facing Farragut Square, was arguably one of the most elegant rows of houses in Washington in its time. Why did K Street change into today's commercial center? What forces molded it into its current image? Should the neighborhood be reconsidered, not on the strength of individual structures, but as an experiment in city building?

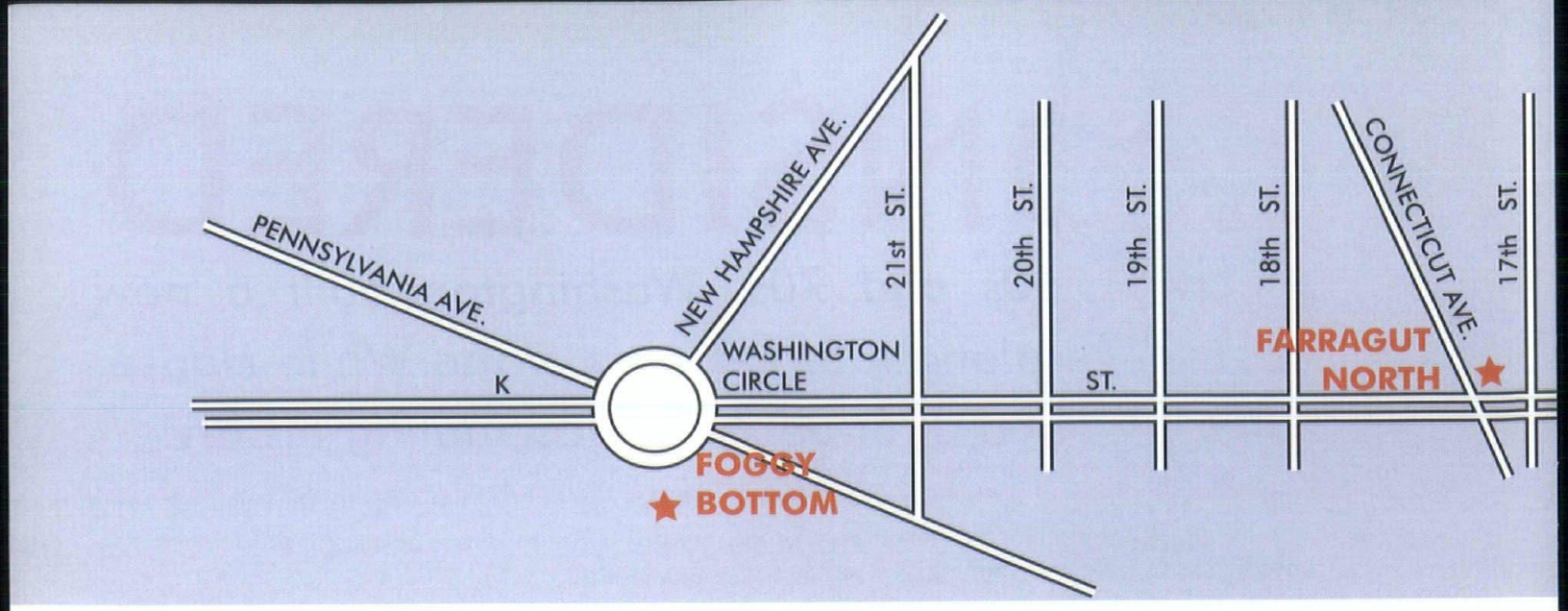
By 1970, Washington's future, like that of other American cities, was thought to lie in the suburbs. Most of the F Street corridor's commercial spaces were over 30 years old, and it showed. Built for an earlier style of business, their small footprints forced businesses to rent multiple floors or buildings. Parking was difficult.

By this time, the K Street mansions west of the White House had been converted to multi-family housing, then boarding houses, and finally office space. K Street's conversion did not happen block by block, but house by house, and sometimes room by room, as economic pressure forced greater density. During World War II, Washington was flooded with people in need of housing; after the war, the growth of downtown continued westward, spurring further change. Preservation movements were active in Dupont Circle and Georgetown, but it was accepted with more nostalgia than dissent that K Street was an office district; its buildings could be sacrificed in the name of improvement. Developers seized the moment to create a new world.

Construction of Washington's Metro system also contributed. Blue, Orange, and Red Lines conjoin between McPherson Square and Foggy Bottom around Farragut Square. With the density of stations and easy auto connections via Interstate 66, Rock Creek Parkway, and the Whitehurst Freeway, K Street was an easy commute for workers from the entire region. Proposed highway and actual Metro construction blighted the residential prospects of these areas and encouraged intense development to capitalize on the new access.

K Street looking east from 17th Street, NW, June 1913 and today.

Photo courtesy of U.S. Commission of Fine Arts



THE K STREET BOX

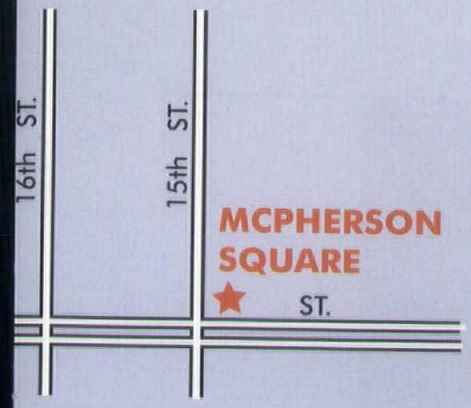
Very quickly, the atrium building became the standard form on K Street. The atrium box is now derided as sterile design, but in the 1970s it was a rational answer to the needs and regulations governing the neighborhood. Buildings meet the sidewalk with no setbacks. One to three levels of retail space are topped by up to ten floors of offices with parking below ground. Often covering entire city blocks, these new floor plans offered significantly greater officescapes to businesses crammed into multiple floors on F Street or previously converted K Street mansions.

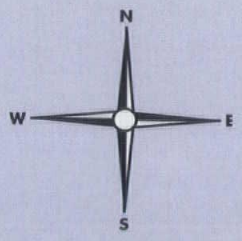
Byron Black, AIA, told *The Washington Post* in 1979 that the K Street atrium building was "the result of a lot of people demanding a lot of space at a time when no one wanted to be east of 16th Street. K Street, with its 130-foot height limit, higher than most areas of the city, and favorable zoning, became the street to develop." (Why is Washington's height limit so important? See sidebar.) Reflecting the aesthetic mindset of the time, the late Vlastimil Koubek, AIA, stated "There is no place for little buildings next to big buildings. They do not go good together."

Other alternatives to downtown developed in this same period. Why is K Street more walkable than Tyson's, more dynamic than Rosslyn, and healthier than Silver Spring? One answer is DC's street grid. The grid imposed a pedestrian-friendlier alternative to the auto-only superblocks developed elsewhere. Below-ground parking and Metro stations allowed all plots to be developed, leaving none of the parking lot gaps that often mar a typical business district. Another answer is the incremental nature of K Street's development: instead of bulldozing the entire neighborhood, new office blocks went up one by one, between blocks of worn but serviceable mansions. Many office structures were built to house firms that were already on site in the converted mansions and looking to expand. This allowed a smoother flow of existing businesses into new construction and stabilized the area's value despite intense reconstruction over the decades.

L'Enfant's K Street also provided the neighborhood with a boulevard with plantings and service roads. DC traffic

▼ *Two angles of K Street, from the 1700 block as it is today and Shephard Row (1701–1705 K S*





authorities recognized this virtue as early as the 1930s, when they rebuilt the center lanes for limited access. The boulevard accommodates through-traffic in the center, local traffic and short-term parking on the service roads, transit connections amongst the trees, and pleasant pedestrian paths on the broad sidewalks. This is the plan of the Champs-Elysees (and before you laugh at the comparison of K Street and Paris, have you been there lately? The French architecture may be more beautiful, but K Street is easier to cross, walk, and shop.)

AN URBAN CRUCIBLE

Federal-era Georgetown is hailed and protected as an architectural gem, but most of Georgetown's buildings are not exceptional in themselves. What makes both Georgetown and K Street work are their consistent massing and street treatments, housing the mix of commercial, residential, and retail uses necessary for a successful neighborhood. Black says in the same 1979 *Post* article, "The 1700 and 1800 blocks of K Street are pure 1960s architecture. Maybe someday people will want to preserve that."

It may be too early to think about preservation. K Street is still growing into its skin. Recent façade changes and guttings that recycle the 1970s concrete frame are giving dimension to banal facades and making the area more fun and usable. These are fine-tunings, however: the mass of K Street is with us, is working, and deserves respect.

What controls building heights in Washington?

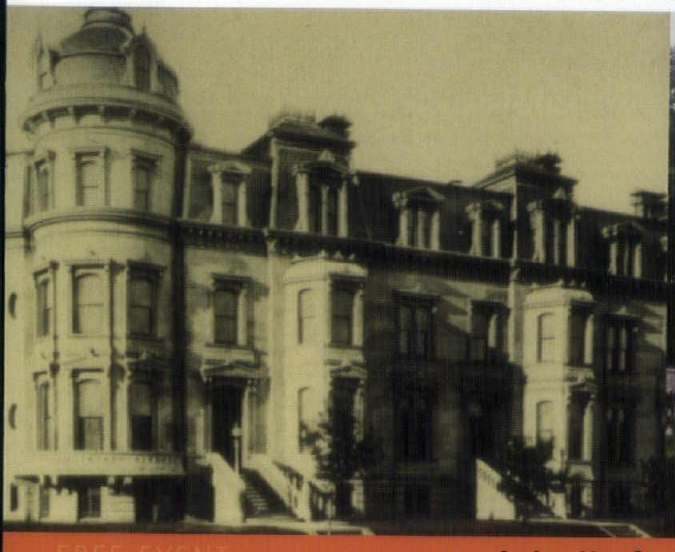
The 1910 Height of Buildings Act was enacted because of the Cairo Apartment Building built in 1894 on Q Street, NW (near AIA/DC's Chapter House). At 160 feet, it not only dwarfs everything around it, but, at that time, it was too tall for fire equipment to reach the upper floors.

There was no law on the books that controlled height. In an effort to protect the safety of DC residents in the future, several local laws were enacted to control building heights. In 1910, Congress entered the fray and determined that building heights should be controlled not only for fire safety, but to make sure the Capitol and the Washington Monument were not overshadowed.

The Height Act established a range of maximum building heights controlled by street widths. The height limit on residential streets is 90 feet. In business areas, the building height is generally limited to the width of the adjacent street plus 20 feet. In addition, there is a general height limit of 130 feet, extended to 160 feet along certain portions of Pennsylvania Avenue.

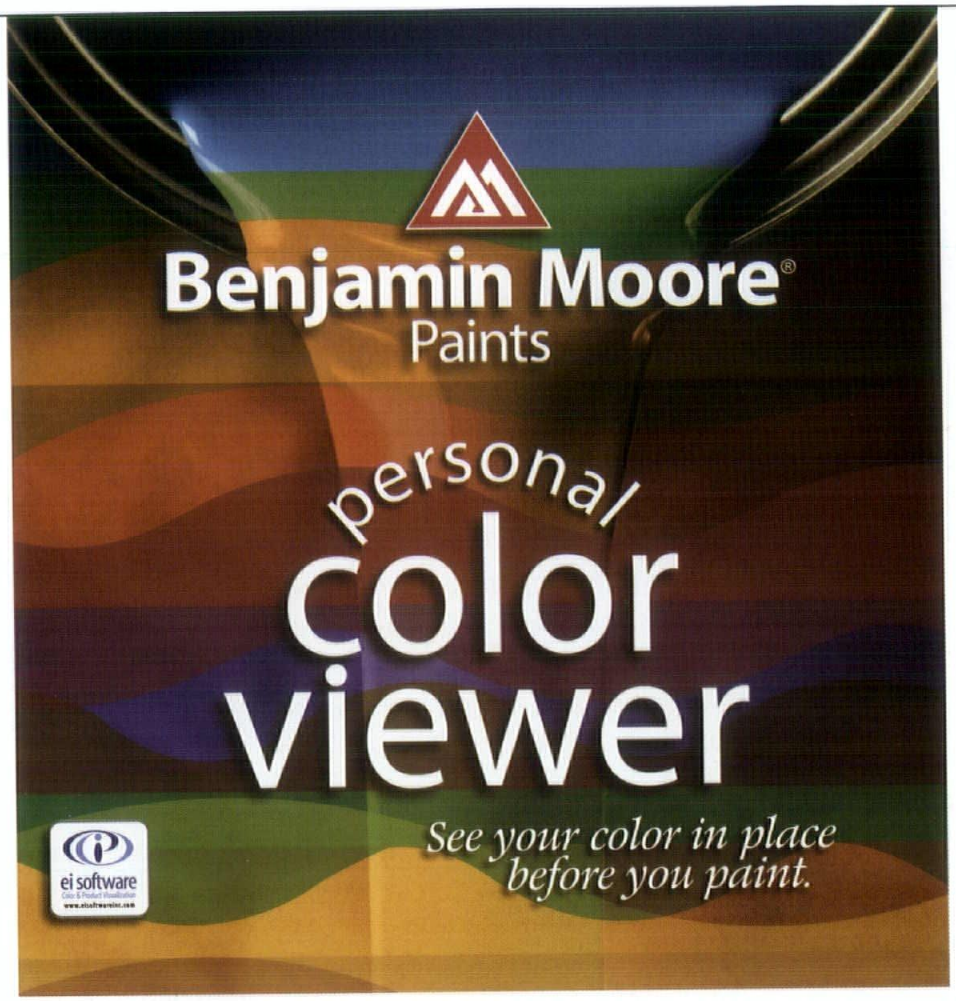
Source: National Capital Planning Commission

W) at Connecticut Avenue *Photos courtesy of U.S. Commission of Fine Arts.*



FREE EVENT **Join Us for Architecture Week 2003:** FREE EVENT

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 6TH WALKING TOUR OF MODERN K STREET *SEE PAGE 20*



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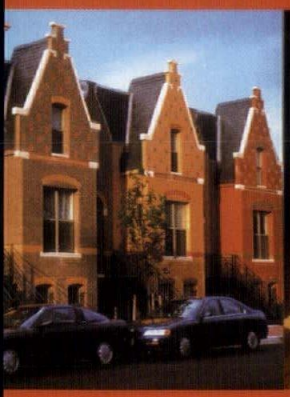

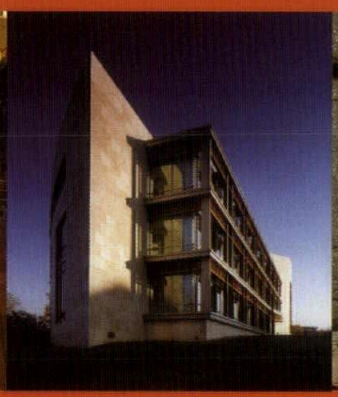

INSPIRE

COMMEMORATE

Celebrate

WHAT GOOD ARCHITECTURE CAN DO

FREE EVENTS presented by the Washington Chapter of the American Institute of Architects
/ 202-667-1798 or reservations@aiadc.com / www.aiadc.com

Saturday, September 6th
Walking Tour of Modern K Street

Once a posh residential district, modern K Street is often derided. How did K Street become the business district it is today, and what is its likely future? What factors created the "K Street Box," and how is this design changing? A walking tour with writer Daniel Emberley and AIA/DC Executive Director Mary Fitch, AICP, explores these issues.
2–3:30 p.m. starting at the St. Regis Hotel at 16th and K Streets, NW. ***Free. Reservations required;*** *call 202.667.1798 or email reservations@aiadc.com.*

Saturday, September 6th
CANSTRUCTION Build–Out

See teams of architects, engineers, and contractors make giant structures from canned goods in a six–hour, marathon building session. The CANSTRUCTIONs are on exhibit all week before being dismantled for donation to the Capital Area Food Bank. The public can vote for their favorite by donating canned food "ballots."
6 p.m.–midnight. The Mall at 2000 Penn, 2000 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW. ***Free. Reservations required;*** *call 202.667.1798 or email reservations@aiadc.com.*

Sunday, September 7th
How to Work with an Architect

Thinking about a new house, addition, or office? Join us for a free workshop with Stephen J. Vanze, AIA, a principal with the award-winning firm of Barnes Vanze Architects. Topics include what to expect from the design and construction process, how to avoid common misunderstandings, and how Washington architects vary in style and practice.
2–4 p.m. Washington Chapter/AIA, 1777 Church Street, NW. ***Free. Reservations required;*** *call 202.667.1798 or email reservations@aiadc.com*

Monday September 8th
Tivoli Square Construction Watch Tour

Washington's famed Tivoli Theater at 14th Street and Park Road, NW, is undergoing a complete renovation as part of a project that includes a new supermarket, offices, and retail space. Join architects from the several firms working on this venture to tour the construction site.
4 p.m. Meet at the trailer on Monroe Street. ***Free. Reservations required;*** *call 202.667.1798 or email reservations@aiadc.com.*

Tuesday, September 9th
Emerging Architects at VEGA

Meet five of Washington's up-and-coming young designers at a free roundtable and reception at VEGA, one of the city's premier home furnishing venues. Todd Ray, AIA, and John Burke, AIA, of Studio27 Architecture; Meghan Walsh, AIA, of Meghan Walsh Architecture; Gregory Rubbo of Scout Motor Company; and Christian Zapatka, Assoc. AIA, of Christian Zapatka Design, LLC, discuss the challenges and future of modern architecture in Washington.
6–9 p.m. Vega, 819 7th Street, NW. ***Free. Reservations required;*** *call 202.667.1798 or email reservations@aiadc.com*

Wednesday, September 10th
Office Tour: K Street Corridor

See architects at work in some of the best looking offices in town—their own! K Street firms open their doors to the public. This is a self-guided tour; walking tour maps available at ZGF, 1800 K Street, NW, Suite 200.
5–7 p.m. ***Free. Reservations required;*** *call 202.667.1798 or email reservations@aiadc.com*

Thursday, September 11th
Dedication of the Garden Memorial
M.V. Leckie Elementary School

Over the course of the past year, volunteers from the Washington Architectural Foundation have worked with every class at Leckie Elementary School in Southwest DC to design and build a garden memorial honoring the lives of the student, teacher, and parents who perished in the attack on the Pentagon on September 11th, 2001. The memorial is dedicated today.
9:30 a.m. M.V. Leckie Elementary School, 4201 Martin Luther King Avenue, SW. ***Free. Reservations required;*** *call 202.667.1798 or email reservations@aiadc.com.*

Friday, September 12th
Jurors' Roundtable

"And the winners are...." After a day-long deliberation, a jury of distinguished visiting architects announces the best new Washington architecture. A reception follows the discussion.
5–7 p.m. Washington Chapter/AIA, 1777 Church Street, NW. ***Free. Reservations required;*** *call 202.667.1798 or email reservations@aiadc.com*

Saturday, September 13th
Festival of the Building Arts

Want to build a brick wall, thatch a roof, climb aboard a concrete mixer, or play "House of Cards," a new game about sustainable design? Come to the National Building Museum's Festival of the Building Arts, where adults and children can explore the art of building.
10 a.m.–4 p.m. National Building Museum, 401 F Street, NW. ***Free. No reservations required.*** *For more information, call 202.272.2448.*

Sunday, September 14th
CANSTRUCTION Awards

"Best Meal," "Structural Ingenuity," "People's Choice," and other awards are given to giant structures made from canned goods. Reception follows. Lend a hand in de-constructing the CANSTRUCTIONs for donation to the Capital Area Food Bank.
2:30–4 p.m. The Mall at 2000 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW. ***Free. Reservations required;*** *call 202.667.1798 or email reservations@aiadc.com*

Monday, September 15th
Rowhouse Redux Roundtable

Over the summer, competing architects have designed a hypothetical "rowhouse for the future" for a family of four with affordable, sustainable, electronically sophisticated, and handicapped-accessible solutions. See jurors' picks for the most imaginative reinvention of the Washington rowhouse.
Exhibit opens at 9 a.m. Jury Forum at 4:30 p.m. Reception at 5:30 p.m. National Building Museum, 401 F Street, NW. ***Free. Reservations required;*** *call 202.667.1798 or email reservations@aiadc.com*

Tuesday, September 16th
Student Competition

Meet the next generation of Washington architects. Students from local architecture schools are challenged by an intriguing design problem (that remains a closely guarded secret until the week before the competition). Their solutions are exhibited all day in the National Building Museum's Great Hall. At 4:30 p.m., the jury discusses the entries and announces the winners.
Exhibit opens at 9 a.m. Jury Forum at 4:30 p.m. Reception at 5:30 p.m. National Building Museum, 401 F Street, NW. ***Free. Reservations required;*** *call 202.667.1798 or email reservations@aiadc.com*

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Debi Fox Photography

The Rowhouse Rethought

by Mary Fitch, AICP

For many architects, the house is more than a container for life: it is a platform for experiment and a laboratory of new building technology.

Throughout the 20th century, architects looked at the form of the house in new ways. The Case Study Houses, for example, designed and built from the later '40s to the early '60s by modernists like Richard Neutra, Charles and Ray Eames, and Eero Saarinen, created ways of living with fewer walls and abundant light. Although revolutionary for their time, many of the features of these "Houses of the Future" gradually changed the form of the average home. The ideal of California living—of big expanses of glass that blur the line of indoor and outdoor—can be traced directly back to those earlier Case Study experiments.

Twentieth-century experimental homes were usually built in the suburbs and surrounded by wide lawns. Experiments within the urban context—inside a city neighborhood—have been rare. With that in mind, AIA/DC and the National Building Museum are cosponsoring a juried exhibition, Rowhouse Redux, to foster experimental housing of a particular type: the Washington rowhouse. Found in every quarter of the city, the rowhouse was the starter home for many families in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. As interest in living in the city has revived, the rowhouse is once again a popular choice, though its cost is increasingly prohibitive for a young family.

In his book, *The New American Townhouse* (New York: Rizzoli, 1999), Alexander Gorlin, AIA, writes that the townhouse (or, as Washingtonians know it, the rowhouse) "is one of the basic building blocks of the city. Defined by two parallel walls and vertically oriented circulation, it is commonly three to five stories tall, the maximum comfortable climb for a person. It is therefore a housing type intimately related to the human size and scale."

Yet the rowhouse's form and shared walls are constraints that challenge experimentation. The designers in this competition have been asked to look at two actual sites—1800 11th Street, NW, a corner site, and 1202 T Street, NW, a mid-block site—to develop a program for a house for a family of four. Under the rules of the competition, the resulting house needs to be:

- Affordable ($200,000 to $300,000 construction cost, excluding land)
- Not more than 2,000 square feet
- Sustainable
- Technologically sophisticated in terms of both building materials and electronics
- Handicapped accessible

The first stage of the competition will be judged by a panel of experts during Architecture Week on September 15th. The winners will build scale models of their designs, which will be included in an exhibit on affordable housing at the National Building Museum set to open in November.

FREE EVENT **Join Us for Architecture Week 2003:** FREE EVENT
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 15TH ROWHOUSE REDUX *SEE PAGE 20*

ROWHOUS

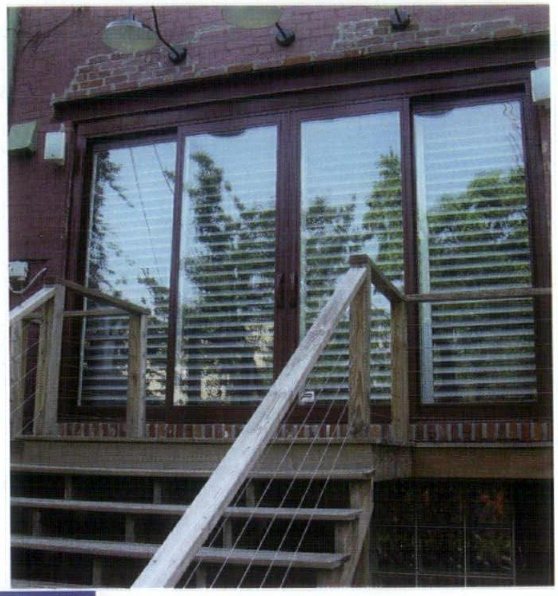
by Hannah McCann

Is it really possible to build a new custom-designed rowhouse for $200,000-$300,000? Yes, acco examples exist throughout the city. These four local rowhouse renovations prove

$60,0000

2227 12th Place, NW
diVISIONONE architectural design

An abandoned rowhouse in Shaw was the first on its street to be gutted and reborn; four years later, the whole block has been transformed. To open and brighten the narrow space, the architects pop a small third level out of the roof, adding clerestories that pour light all the way to the ground floor. Materials are simple: hardwood floors, exposed ductwork, a custom-made steel stair railing, and brick walls exposed by painstakingly chiseling off the plaster.

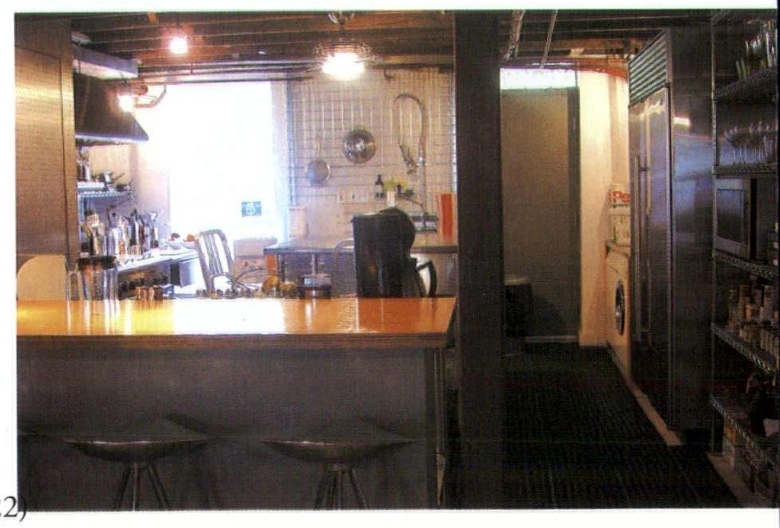


$90,0000

Altman Residence
Hillary L. Altman, Assoc. AIA

The new owners—an architect and a city planner—loved this small Victorian rowhouse's location on 15th Street, NW, near U Street and Whole Foods, but its spaces felt dark and cramped, plus its kitchen was buried in the lower level under the living spaces. They started by transforming the lower level into a clean, raw space with exposed brick walls, concrete floors, and panels of perforated metal. Hoping to open a restaurant or nightclub one day, the owners wanted a kitchen where they could entertain 20 friends with ease. Open restaurant shelving and commercial-grade appliances help. On the main level, they refaced the back of the house in glass to bring in light. Sliding panels of commercial-style metal louvers provide shade or privacy when necessary.

Debi Fox Photography



E RE-DO'S

o Rowhouse Redux, the upcoming exhibit at the National Building Museum. Encouraging real-life you have the house, you can get the space you want for even less than $200,000.

$125,0000

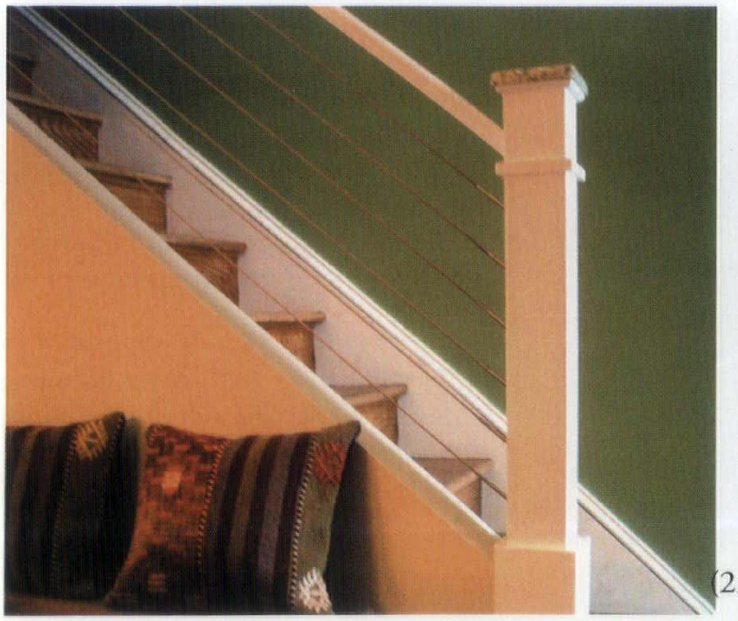
Sanders Residence
inscape studio

A newel post topped in cast concrete with inlaid, sparkling recycled glass tells the story behind this Adams Morgan rowhouse renovation: the space is designed to catch the light and use environmentally-friendly materials. In the kitchen, French doors and a transom let in sunlight and views of the backyard. Outside, a sustainably harvested cedar fence surrounds the flagstone patio. Environmentally-sensitive design features include energy-efficient windows; linoleum floors; low-VOC paints, sealers, and floor finishes; Energy-Star rated appliances; formaldehyde-free cabinetry; and a new reflective roof to reduce heat gain.

$175,0000

Addition to an
1812 Rope-Maker's Cottage
Christian Zapatka Design, LLC

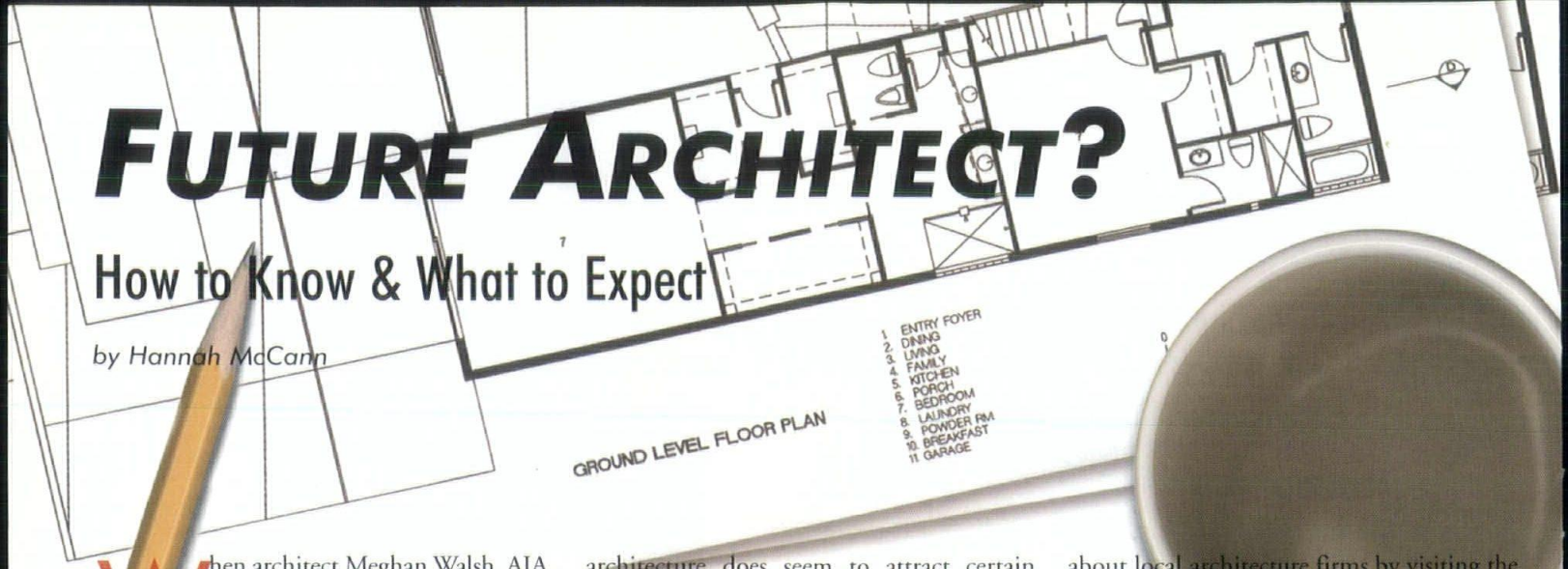
A baby was coming, but the owners of this tiny house in Georgetown didn't want to move to the suburbs. After negotiating a labyrinth of city and neighborhood approvals, their architect designed a three-story, modern addition that doubles the size of the house without changing its historic facade. The project incorporates as much glass as possible, from skylights in the master bedroom to glass panels in the garden that illuminate new subterranean rooms below. What was the exterior of the adjacent house is now inside this addition, making a warm, exposed brick surface in both the bedroom and kitchen.



FUTURE ARCHITECT?

How to Know & What to Expect

by Hannah McCann



When architect Meghan Walsh, AIA, was in the 7th grade, she handed in her book report on *Charlie and the Great Glass Elevator* with something extra: a model of the elevator. Her interest in architecture had been evident since she was a small child. "I used to sit for hours and stare at the ceiling," she remembers, "imagining the space upside-down."

Architect Todd Ray, AIA, knows exactly when it hit him. "I was in the 6th grade. It was Career Day." As the visiting architect described his job, Ray was struck by the "nobility" of a profession that allows you to "build for others." At his first chance, Ray took drafting classes in high school and then began working part-time as a draftsman. The job helped pay for the next six years of architecture school.

Ray and Walsh are both young architects who recently started their own practices. Both describe architecture as a "passion" that has carried them through the arduous process of becoming licensed, practicing professionals. Both warn that, to become an architect, you need to work hard, make sacrifices, and realize that this isn't a job you go into for the money. "But I feel wealthy because I'm a happy person," Ray explains. "I love coming to work every day."

RIGHT FOR YOU?

For architects like Walsh and Ray, the spark comes at a young age; others come to architecture later in life. Philip Johnson didn't become an architect until he was 36.

While age is not a constraint, architecture does seem to attract certain personalities. Being observant, analytical, detail-oriented, and self-disciplined are considered important traits. Architects are creative problem-solvers. Their work requires cooperation with others, good written and oral communication skills, organization, and leadership qualities. Each job entails accepting criticism and building upon it.

According to architecture schools—where entry is competitive—the ideal beginning architecture student has a solid background in the physical sciences and mathematics, conceptualizes at an above-average level, communicates skillfully, demonstrates a breadth of interest in the humanities, and draws and sketches with ease.

Few students have all these qualifications. Prospective architects can enhance their applications—and decide if the profession is right for them—by exploring the field hands-on. Read books and magazines on architecture (*subscriptions to* ARCHITECTURE*DC are free*). Learn about local architecture firms by visiting the Washington Chapter of the AIA (AIA/DC) and browsing through portfolios of award-winning projects. (*Join us for the announcement of the newest winners on September 12th*). Visit firm offices if you can (*and join us for the Office Tour on September 10th*). Take time to look at the construction sites that are everywhere in Washington now; a summer job in construction can be useful too. AIA/DC offers free architect-led "Construction Watch" tours of local projects every month; they're advertised on www.aiadc.com (*join us for the tour of Tivoli Square on September 8th*).

Meghan Walsh, AIA

Visit an architecture school design studio to get a glimpse of what the next five to eight years of your life will be like. In Washington, there are schools of architecture at The Catholic University of America, Howard University, the University of Maryland, and Virginia Tech's Washington-Alexandria Architectural Consortium. Catholic and Maryland both offer summer programs to high school students considering a career in architecture. (For more information on the summer programs, visit http://architecture.cua.edu/specialprograms/04highschool/highschoolframe.html and www.summer.umd.edu/youngscholars/#arch.html) (*Join us for the Student Competition on September 16th.*)

LEARNING "ARCHITECT"

You can find the architecture school on nearly any college campus by looking for the building with the lights blazing in the middle of the night. Expect to become a night owl in the design studio, which is a unique aspect of your education as an

architect. Students learn by doing, working either individually or in teams to resolve design challenges put forth by their professors. Tired and spent, students present their finished designs in a critique before a faculty jury that evaluates and discusses the solutions.

Either a Bachelor in Architecture (BArch) or Master of Architecture (MArch) degree is required to become a licensed, practicing professional. 112 college architecture programs are accredited by the National Architectural Accrediting Board; students should verify accreditation (visit www.naab.org) to be sure their degree will lead to licensure.

There are three ways to earn your architecture degree. Which type of program is right for you will depend on your interests and goals as an architect. Students who feel certain of their interest in architecture may choose a five-year professional degree (BArch) so they can begin their career as quickly as possible. Students who are less certain, want more flexibility, or who wish to explore a wider range of subjects earn a four-year pre-professional degree (BA or BS) plus a two-year professional degree (MArch); this is the most common choice. Students coming to architecture as a second career from undergraduate backgrounds of every discipline supplement their BA or BS with a three-to-four-year professional degree (MArch).

Meghan Walsh knew she wanted to be an architect, but she was offered a full scholarship to a college that didn't have an architecture program. So she earned a four-year Bachelor of Fine Arts degree, structuring her own interdisciplinary program with classes in engineering, interior design, landscape design, and architectural history. She followed up with three-and-a-half years of graduate studies in the architecture school at the University of Michigan, covering all of her costs by teaching freshmen writing and being a resident director in the dorms. "It was a lot of work. I was just flat-out *in school,*" she explains.

Her side jobs paid off. Because Walsh emerged from eight years of school without

Todd Ray, AIA

massive student loans, she could afford to take an internship at a firm she admired though it paid less, do volunteer work on the side, and start her own firm shortly after becoming registered. She warns architecture students to plan ahead. "You're in school as long as a doctor or a lawyer, but you don't make as much money when you get out."

According to a 2002 survey, the average starting architectural intern in the DC area earns $36,800. The post-graduate internship under a licensed professional architect is required for registration. A national Intern Development Program (IDP) maintains training standards for interns' experience. It takes at least three years to fulfill IDP requirements, though extracurricular work (including volunteer projects) can make the internship go more quickly.

Once your IDP requirements are met, the final step to becoming a licensed professional architect is to take the Architectural Registration Exam. The nine-part exam is usually taken in sections. Candidates spend months preparing, knowing that the average pass rate is 66% per section. After you pass the ARE, you are eligible to become a licensed architect in the jurisdiction(s) where you want to work. You are now, officially, an architect.

NOW WHAT?

There are as many types of architects as there are kinds of architecture. Architecture offices range from large firms, where architects specialize on aspects of projects that are passed from division to division, to small firms, where a team is responsible for a project from start to finish. Some architects choose to go into related fields, becoming urban planners, architectural critics, architectural photographers, contractors, developers, furniture designers, or museum curators, among other professionals.

Architect salaries range widely, but the 2002 average for a Senior Architect (with 10+ years of experience) in the DC metro area was $69,900. Employment opportunities for architects are closely related to the health of the economy. In Washington, for at least the last five years, the market has been hot, and firms consistently report that they are busier than ever before.

The rewards exceed the paychecks, architects will tell you. "They're the rewards of making something beautiful and feeling as though you've added something positive to the world," Todd Ray explains. "You bring something into realization that wasn't there before, and you can stand back and look at it and say, 'This is good!'"

Architects love their jobs. Despite how busy they are, many also do volunteer work. Volunteer projects offer an opportunity to explore new types of design, see different neighborhoods, or simply give back. And, if you're like Ray, you always make time for Career Day at local schools.

THE STEPS TO BECOMING AN ARCHITECT

- Earn college degree from accredited school of architecture, either 5-year BArch, 4-year architecture-related BA or BS and 2-year MArch, or 4-year non-architecture BA or BS and 3- to 4-year MArch.
- Intern under licensed architect (usually for 3 years).
- Pass 9-part ARE exam.
- Become licensed in jurisdiction(s) you wish to work and maintain license through continuing education.

FREE EVENT **Join Us for Architecture Week 2003:** FREE EVENT
TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 16TH STUDENT COMPETITION SEE PAGE 20

House of Cards

New Game Reveals Choice in Building Materials

by Chris French, Assoc. AIA

If you know kids who are curious about building, here's a fun challenge for them. "House of Cards" is a new game being developed by the AIA/DC Committee on the Environment (COTE) that allows middle-schoolers (or their parents!) to "play architect" and design their own houses, making environmentally conscious decisions in the process. The game is designed to make players aware of alternative construction materials and show how conventional choices fill our landfills.

Players see how architects choose the materials that go into buildings and try their hand at selecting windows, roofing materials, structure, floors, and even the energy source that feeds the house. Seasoned homeowners may be surprised as their kids start to "spec" building materials that most of us have never seen before, from bamboo floors to vegetative roofs. There are over 5,000 possible house design solutions in the game.

Both a board game and an electronic game are in development, while introductory trading cards (at right) are currently in production. A sneak preview of the game will be debuted at the National Building Museum's Festival of the Building Arts on Saturday, September 13th.

What Am I?

Trading Cards

Can you guess what's in the photos on these trading cards at right? Before you turn the page, read the clues and try to figure out what the objects are and how they might be used in buildings.

All kinds of decisions go into the construction of buildings. Should you build with metals mined from the earth or recycled from old products? Should you use plastics made from oil, wood from forests, mud, sand, or even grass? Where will your heat, electricity, and water come from? After thousands of years of developing technology, it turns out that some decisions are harmful to us or to the fragile balance of nature that supports us, while other decisions are less harmful or even good for us. Can you tell the difference?

The answers are on the backs of the trading cards. Cut them out and trade with your friends, or share them with someone you know who is building a house. More trading cards will be available at the Festival of the Building Arts at the National Building Museum on September 13th!

Special thanks to those who kindly provided their product images for the flash cards: The Murus Company, SIPBuilder, Inc., and nora rubber flooring.

FREE EVENT **Join Us for Architecture Week 2003:** FREE EVENT

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 13TH FESTIVAL OF THE BUILDING ARTS *SEE PAGE 20*

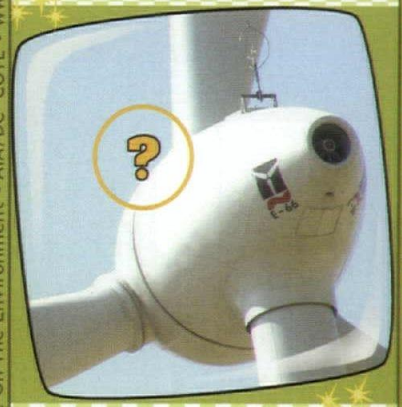
WHAT AM I?

HINT It rhymes with "zoo" and might be a panda's lunch.

WHAT AM I?

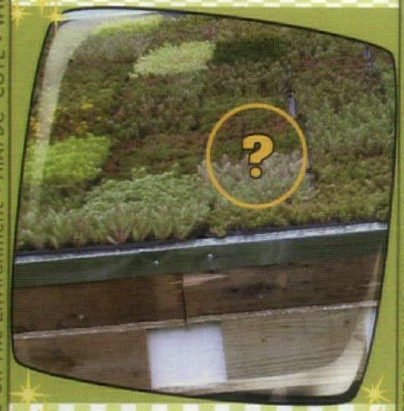
HINT It's a sandwich of sorts but you can't eat it.

WHAT AM I?



HINT What goes round and round but never leaves the ground?

WHAT AM I?



HINT What grows on the ground is useful overhead!

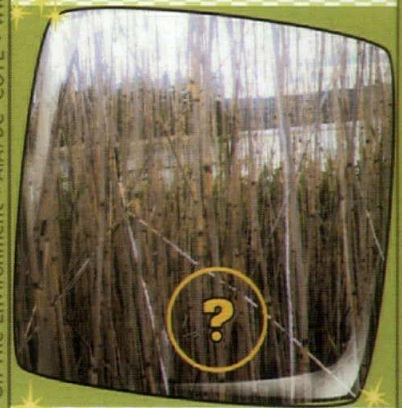
WHAT AM I?

HINT Grow me, bounce me, or put me on your wheels.

WHAT AM I?

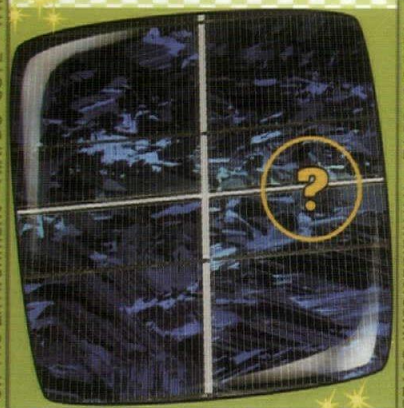
HINT Where things go when they're thrown away.

WHAT AM I?



HINT I'm a dairy cow's dinner.

WHAT AM I?



HINT Sorry, no hint this time. You're on your own!

Committee On The Environment • AIA/DC COTE • www.aiadc.com/COTEdc.html

It's a SURPRISE!

To find out more about this and other environmentally responsible building materials, come see the new game

"House of Cards"

at the Festival of the Building Arts on Saturday, September 13th, 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the National Building Museum, 401 F Street, NW. For more information, visit *www.nbm.org* or *www.aiadc.com/COTEdc.html.*

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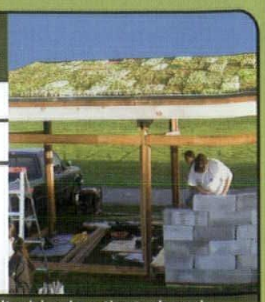
Vegetative Roof



Made of : Soil and plants

Makes : A *cooler* roof

Websites :
http://www.greenroofs.com

Most roofs are made of asphalt shingles that absorb heat and make cities hot in the summer. A vegetative roof absorbs rain, which means fewer big, expensive sewers are needed. A vegetative roof also helps insulate a building. The plants make oxygen, helping to reduce pollution.

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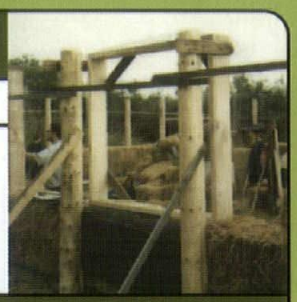
It's Strawbale!



Made of : dried grass

Makes : building insulation, animal feed, and paper.

Straw can be put inside walls as insulation, so you don't have to use as much energy to heat and cool your house. Straw is easy to grow.

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A Windfarm !

Made of : Lots of wind mills, usually made from wood, steel, or aluminum.

Makes : Electricity (enough to power one million American homes... or more!)

Websites :
http://www.awea.org

Throughout history, people have used the power of wind to pump water, mill grain, and sail around the world. Today, windfarms can be used instead of coal or oil to make electricity. Since windfarms run on air, the energy is free!

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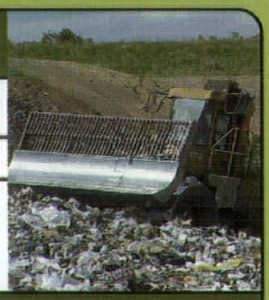
It's a Landfill!



Made of : Everything, including paper, glass, and metal.

Makes : Mountains of mess!

Websites:
www.kidsrecycle.org

Each year, people in the U.S. throw away 200 million tons of stuff, most of which goes into landfills. Some landfills leak toxins into our water, and many are getting full. Recycling your paper, glass and metal helps keep stuff out of the landfills.

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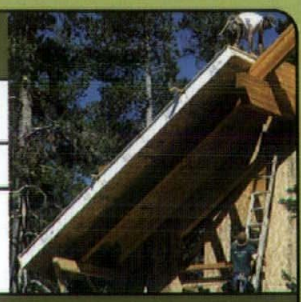
It's a SIP!



Made of : a sandwich of foam between pressed sawdust panels.

Makes : floors, walls and roofs.

Websites:
www.sips.org
www.buildwithsips.com

SIP stands for Structural Insulated Panel. SIPs can be used instead of plywood to make extra-insulated, super-strong buildings. Homes built with SIPs have withstood great earthquakes and hurricanes. Builders like SIPs because they are easy to install.

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It's Rubber!

Made of : sap from a ficus plant.

Makes : tires, machine parts, shoe soles, running tracks, flooring, and more!

Rubber comes from a plant grown mainly in Asia. It can be recycled to make all kinds of things, from garbage cans to your kitchen floor. Rubber makes a durable, comfortable surface for standing, walking, or running.

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It's Bamboo!

Made of : Bamboo, the tallest grass in the world.

Makes : Floors, roofs, walls, columns, musical instruments, kitchen tools, paper, and food for animals.

Bamboo can be used instead of wood to make strong floors and beams. It gives off more oxygen than trees and grows more quickly. It takes 59 days for bamboo to grow 60 feet high and 59 years for a tree to grow that high. Bamboo leaf canopies help protect earth against "sunburn" from ultraviolet rays.

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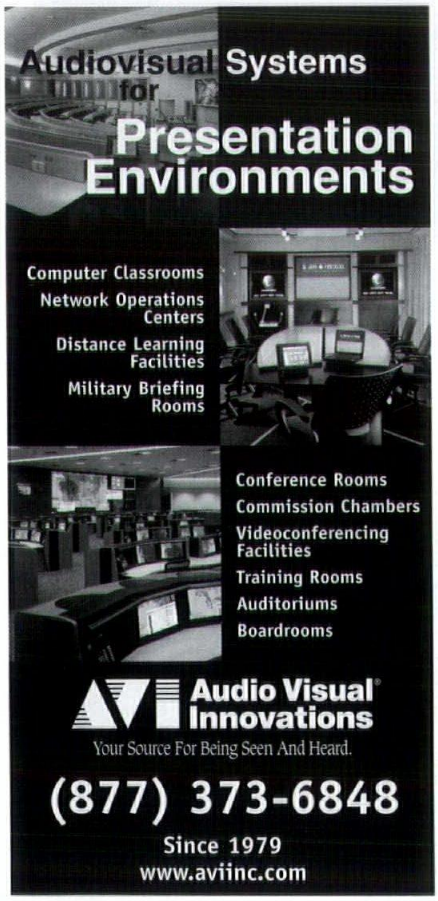

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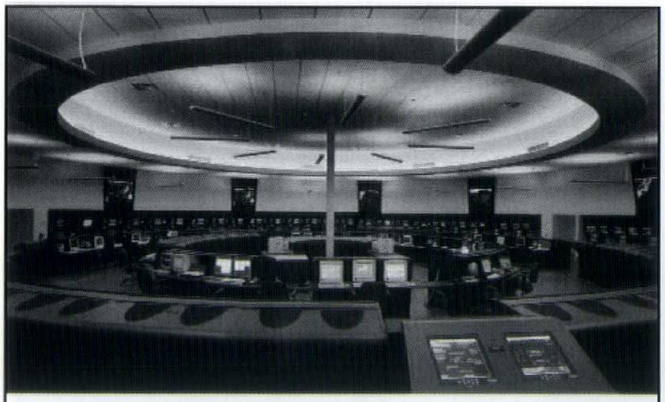

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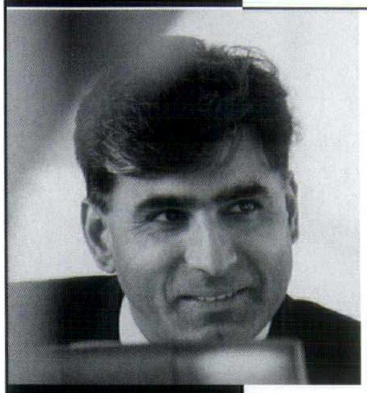

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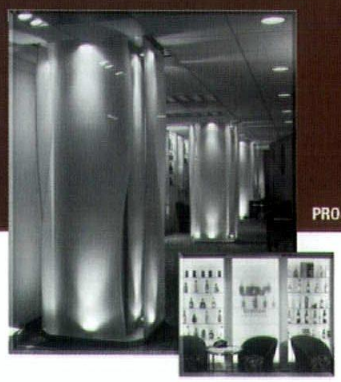

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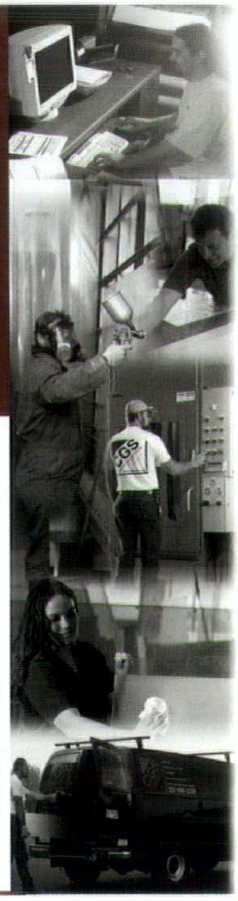

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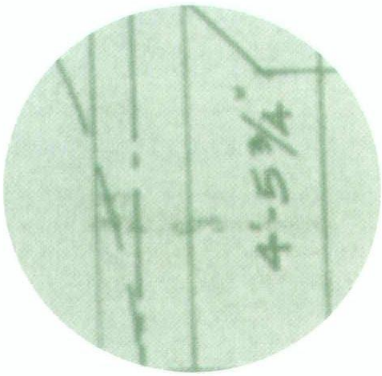

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